



Common Screening and Diagnostic Tests

| Test Name | Definition |
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| Angiogram | Exam of your blood vessels using x-rays. The doctor inserts a small tube into the blood vessel and injects dye to see the vessels in the x-ray. |
| Barium enema | A lubricated enema tube is gently inserted into your rectum. Barium flows into your colon. An x-ray is taken of the large intestines. |
| Biopsy | Removal of a small piece of tissue to check for health problems. There are different types of biopsies. |
| Blood test | Blood is taken from a vein in the inside elbow or back of the hand to test for a health problem. |
| Bone mineral density test (BMD) | X-rays of the bones are tested for osteoporosis, or weakening of the bones. |
| Bronchoscopy | Exam of the lungs. A bronchoscope, or flexible tube, is put through the nose or mouth and into your windpipe (trachea). |
| Clinical breast exam (CBE) | A doctor looks at the breasts and underarm areas to find lumps or other problems. |
| Chest x-ray | An x-ray of the chest, lungs, heart, large arteries, ribs, and diaphragm. |
| Colonoscopy | A flexible tube is put into the colon through the anus to see the colon. |
| Computed tomographic (CT or CAT) scan | The patient lies on a table and x-rays of the body are taken from different angles. Sometimes, a fluid is used to highlight parts of the body in the scan. |
| Echocardiogram | An instrument (that looks like a microphone) is placed on the chest. It uses sound waves to create a moving picture of the heart. A picture appears on a TV screen, and the heart can be seen in different ways. |
| Electroencephalogram (EEG) | Measures the electrical activity of the brain, using electrodes that are put on the patient's scalp. Sometimes patients sleep during the test. |
| Electrocardiogram (EKG or ECG) | Records the electrical activity of the heart, using electrodes placed on the arms, legs, and chest. |
| Exercise stress test | Electrodes are placed on the chest, arms, and legs to record the heart's activity. A blood pressure cuff is placed around the arm and is inflated every few minutes. Heart rate and blood pressure are taken before exercise starts. The patient walks on a treadmill or pedals a stationary bicycle. The pace of the treadmill is increased. The response of the heart is monitored. The test continues until |

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| | target heart rate is reached. Monitoring continues after exercise for 10 to 15 minutes or until the heart rate returns to normal. |
| Fecal occult blood test (FOBT) | Detects hidden blood in a bowel movement. There are two types: the smear test and flushable reagent pads. |
| Laparoscopy | A small tube with a camera is inserted into the abdomen through a small cut in or just below the belly-button to see inside the abdomen and pelvis. Other instruments can be inserted in the small cut as well. It is used for both diagnosing and treating problems inside the belly. |
| Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) | The patient lies on a table which slides into a large tunnel-like tube within a scanner. Small coils may be placed around the head, arm, leg, or to other areas. Powerful magnets and radio waves create pictures of the body. |
| Mammogram | One breast at a time is rested on a flat surface that contains an x-ray plate. A device presses firmly against the breast. An x-ray is taken to show a picture of the breast. |
| Medical history | The doctor or nurse talks to the patient about current and past illnesses, surgeries, pregnancies, medications, allergies, use of alternative therapies, vitamins and supplements, diet, alcohol and drug use, physical activity, and family history of diseases. |
| Pap test | The nurse or doctor uses a small brush to take cells from the cervix (opening of the uterus) to look at under a microscope in a lab. |
| Pelvic exam | A doctor or nurse asks about the patient's health and looks at the vaginal area. The doctor or nurse checks the tubes, ovaries, and uterus by putting two gloved fingers inside the vagina. With the other hand, the doctor or nurse will feel from the outside for any lumps or tenderness. |
| Physical exam | The doctor or nurse will test for diseases, assess your risk of future medical problems, encourage a healthy lifestyle, and update your vaccinations. |
| Positron emission tomography (PET) scan | The patient is injected with a radioactive substance, like glucose. A scanner detects scan any cancerous areas in the body. Cancerous tissue absorbs more of the substance and looks brighter in images than normal tissue. |
| Sigmoidoscopy | The sigmoidoscope is a small camera attached to a flexible tube. This tube, about 20 inches long, is gently inserted into the colon. As the tube is slowly removed, the lining of the bowel is examined. |
| Spirometry | The patient breathes into a mouthpiece that is connected to an instrument called a spirometer. The spirometer records the amount and the rate of air that is breathed in and out over a specified time. It measures how well the lungs exhale. |
| Ultrasound | A clear gel is put onto the skin over the area being examined. An instrument is then moved over that area. |

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| | The machine sends out sound waves, which reflect off the body. A computer receives these waves and uses them to create pictures of the body. |

Last Updated: January, 2005